



Workshop on Resource Mobilisation for the Implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification

**San Salvador, El Salvador,
October 20 and 21, 2000**

I. Background

1. The Third Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought, held in Recife, Brazil in November 1999, requested the Global Mechanism of the Convention to organise, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Convention, a series of workshops on approaches to resource mobilisation. Based on this mandate, four workshops were held: one in Mombasa, focused on East and South Africa and; the second was held in El Salvador for Latin America and the Caribbean, the third in Algiers for North Africa and the fourth in Bangkok for Asia. The last workshop, for Central and West Africa will take place in early 2001.

II. Participation

2. All Latin American and Caribbean countries Parties to the Convention were invited, as well as representatives of state organisations, agencies of the United Nations system, regional and subregional intergovernmental organisations, agencies for cooperation and non-governmental organisations, including UNDP, UNEP, IFAD, FAO, IDB, GTZ, the French agency for Technical Cooperation and the Central American Commission for Environment and Development.

Point 1 of the Agenda: Opening of the Meeting

3. The opening ceremony took place on Friday, October 20, 2000 in the Hotel Camino Real, San Salvador, El Salvador. It was opened by Mr. Per Rydén, Managing Director of the Global Mechanism of the Convention, who explained briefly the origin and development of the activities of the Global Mechanism, as well as the lessons learned from these regional workshops. He explained that the aim of these workshops was not for appropriation of funds but rather for opportunities for enhancing links between the donors and users of financial resources. He made it clear that this is the mandate of the Convention which issues the terms of reference for the Global Mechanism. By quoting literally the text of certain paragraphs of the Convention, he underlined the Global Mechanism's mandate, thus clarifying the differences between the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Global Mechanism (GM).

4. In addition, he described the GM as a Partnership Building system of cooperation, or interfaces between those in need of resources and those who provide them, in order to mobilise those resources for combating desertification and land degradation. He referred to Article 21 of the Convention, to the existence of bilateral, multilateral and private financial resources, and stressed the need to use these resources more efficiently and effectively. He also emphasised that the war against land degradation and desertification is a challenge not only for the ministries responsible for the environment but also for those in charge of agriculture, livestock, watershed management and rural development. The ministries in charge of finance and planning must also be involved as they participate in mainstreaming and owing to their leading role in negotiating technical and financial assistance. Hence, these activities must be better streamlined.

5. He stressed the support of the Global Mechanism (GM) as catalyst for offering activities with a multiplier effect on programmes and projects devoted to combat desertification, as shown by returns to investment and mobilisation of substantial financial resources. He stated that the name of the Convention in referring to Desertification, does not convey a broad enough concept in view of the magnitude and alternatives of the land degradation problem, which is of a multidisciplinary and multi-sectorial nature, and whose processes are clearly reflected in all of the region's regional coverage.

6. Subsequently, he referred to the need to identify regional institutions among countries, such as CARICOM, CCDA, ECLAC, etc. Lastly, he mentioned collaboration with organisations that compose the Facilitation Committee of the GM: IFAD, UNDP and the World Bank, in addition to the regional banks, FAO, UNEP and the GEF as well as the

Secretariat of the Convention. In conclusion, he thanked the Government of El Salvador for its invitation to hold this workshop in San Salvador, and expressed his gratitude to the Regional Coordination Unit for its cooperation with the GM's activities in the region and with the workshop's development, and to the GTZ for its participation.

7. Next, her Excellency the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador, Mrs. Ana Maria Majano, expressed to the participants her satisfaction and gratitude for their presence, as well as her gratitude to the Global Mechanism for having accepted the invitation to hold this meeting in her country. She reported that discussion of the subjects of desertification and land degradation are currently being stimulated not only on the official level but also at the level of ordinary civil society. The great challenge of the mainstreaming of the Convention is very important, but so is the entire subject of the environment.

8. She stated that environmental considerations must not be additions to the other developmental concerns but must be combined with them. She also declared that the title of the Convention - being focused on desertification - is not helpful to the advancement of activities addressed to combating land degradation in the context of the region. Subsequently, she asserted that the great challenge to environmental institutions is to achieve the integration and mainstreaming of their programmes in the plans of virtually all other sectors. Clearly, major financial and technical resources addressed to the challenge of land degradation are required, which are often aimed at agricultural and social development in the countries.

Point 2 of the Agenda: Report of the Action Programme of the Global Mechanism in Latin America and the Caribbean.

9. Mrs. Ana Teresa Saez, Responsible of the Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Global Mechanism of the Convention presented the GM's action programme in the region. She described what the Global Mechanism is and how it functions, what challenges it must face, the basic principles and the operational strategic framework.

10. She also mentioned some of the programmes and projects that the Mechanism has supported in its early phases, on a national, subregional and regional scale. She explained the GM functions in accordance with the requests expressed by governments as a demand-driven organisation. She referred to some specific projects and underlined the GM's function as facilitator for the negotiating processes of bilateral agreements in implementation of the Convention in Latin America and the Caribbean. She also mentioned the roles to be played by DESELAC and FIELD. In addition, she described the priorities that stem from the Convention itself, from the resolutions of the Conference of the Parties (COP), and from the regional meetings of GRULAC and of other agencies related to the CCD. Subsequently, Dr. Saez distributed copies of a resume of her presentation, in Spanish and English. A CD-ROM was produced, and distributed to the participants, as basic documentation for supporting DESELAC and FIELD as a common information platform for the region. It reflects the Parties contributions to the rationalisation of the information according to the FIELD matrices. This effort covers existing programmes, projects, institutions and financing, and it is considered as the basis for actual exchange among the different development stakeholders in the region.

Point 3 of the Agenda: Report of the Regional Coordination Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean

11. Mr. Rafael Rodríguez Capetillo, Coordinator of the Regional Coordination Unit briefly explained the activities being carried on by the Unit, specifically with regard to the system of exchange of regional information, DESELAC. In addition, he stressed the recommendations and briefings stemming from the meetings of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean on the subject of the fight against desertification. Among other programmes and projects, he mentioned the Harmonisation of Public Policies, the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, the creation of communication nodes in some of the countries of the region, and in particular the DESELAC perspectives as an information mechanism for the Convention in the region.

Point 4 of the Agenda: Presentation of the Information Systems FIELD

12. Mr. Simone Quatrini made an audiovisual presentation of the FIELD system as an information system regarding financial needs and availabilities, which stresses the modes for accessing the different organisations for technical and financial cooperation.

13. The FIELD system (Financial Information Engine of Land Degradation) has been operating since late 1999 in consultation and with the technical support of WAICENT (World Agriculture Information Centre) of FAO. He reported that the system already has an internet site, <http://www.gm-uncd.org> and is focused on developing countries according to the World Bank classification. Currently, in order to continue developing FIELD and transform it into a useful tool for donors as well as recipient users, it is engaged in gathering information and standardising it. The regional effort generated for this workshop in El Salvador represents the summit of an explicit effort to model and reinforce the information system of the Global Mechanism, FIELD. The workshop has firmed up the partnership that is essential for the development of the basis of the negotiating process and for the mobilisation of resources.

Point 5 of the Agenda: Presentation regarding experiences in the implementation of the Convention in Cuba

14. Mrs. Nery Urquiza reported on the activities carried on in Cuba regarding the design of a program for combating desertification. She referred not so much to the technical and scientific aspects of the programme as to the processes that lead to institutionalisation of the Convention in Cuba. In this context, she explained that land reclamation is necessary, but that so is combating other management methods that unleashed land degradation and, at the same time modify mental and economic patterns so as to convert the whole into a system to benefiting the people in a sustainable manner. She asserted that signature (1994) and ratification (1997) had taken place, as well as the creation of agencies for consultation and follow-up, of a body for national coordination and of the National Organisation for Combating Desertification in which 36 representatives of different institutions - governmental and non-governmental - are represented. Lastly, she reported that a National Action Programme (NAP) had been developed with the use of available methodological guidelines. The development of the Programme had boosted the level of visibility as well as of that of participation of different sectors of society.

Point 6 of the Agenda: Presentation on the evaluation of the DESELAC nodes in the Region, their potential and their current limitations.

15. Mr. Escobar, representative of FIDAMERICA, presented the results of the activities of the Global Mechanism with respect to the evaluation of the capabilities installed in the DESELAC nodes. He stated that, by utilising contacts and direct surveys among the focal points of the countries of the region, it has been possible to construct several profiles for a relatively small number of DESELAC nodes. With some variation reflecting the relative developments among the different countries, as well as of their technological and financial capabilities, some similar situations were encountered as regards training needs, and the need for training and harmonisation of procedures became evident, leading to the need for developing national networks inside each country. The system must not remain one of static information gathering, but must rather develop capability for processing information as well as gathering information from secondary sources and the capability to process such information and, as a result, become an active system. Lastly, the speaker explained briefly how FIDAMERICA functions: it is a project sponsored by IFAD and coordinated by RIMISP (International Network for Research Methodology on Production Systems), and is designed to create a system, based on Internet, which connects organisations and projects working in disadvantaged rural areas of Latin America and the Caribbean and which allows the interchange of knowledge and experiences regarding rural development.

Point 7 of the Agenda: Presentations by representatives of Technical and Financial Cooperation

16. Mr. Moro, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations and UNDP Representative in El Salvador, stressed the great changes that have recently been taken place in the architecture of the international financial and economic systems. These changes signify that the bases of the system of financial cooperation are no longer as predictable as they were in a not so distant past. The areas of interest have changed, as well the procedures and the amounts made available. The realms of action of the different organisations are viewed from different angles and the coordination between them has weakened; as a result, the resources are channelled in ways that differ importantly from the past. On the other hand, the organisations have understood in many cases that the old ways of administering cooperation and assistance have not yielded the expected outcomes. Donors are demanding contribution of local funds as a condition for both technical and financial collaboration. The current approach of most, if not all, international aid organisations is an anti-poverty focus. Today, the United Nations agencies must be considered more as process facilitators and certifiers than as financiers. Today it is accepted that the recipients of assistance participate more actively in setting priorities and procedures as well as share responsibility.

17. Mrs. Peña Montenegro, IFAD Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, referring to certain concepts voiced by the UNDP representative, stressed the changes that have taken place with respect to procedures in the world of international cooperation agencies. For IFAD, the basic aim is poverty alleviation, and this is attained by means of both technical and financial support. Clearly, however, no single organisation can alleviate poverty in such a heterogeneous region as Latin America and the Caribbean. Moreover, she asserted that IFAD has approved projects amounting to over 645 million US dollars. National counterpart contributions to these projects amount to 1,200 million dollars, including contributions in kind such as equipment and human resources. Currently, IFAD is engaged in more than 50 operational projects. She stressed the problems arising from lack, or incomplete, communication inside the countries, especially as regards communication between different ministries, which has an impact on project outcome owing to insufficient integration and coordination. She underlined the role to be played by environment ministries by creating among technical specialists an awareness that the subjects of land degradation must be broached. IFAD's role is framed by the active participation of ministries, including involvement by, and enlightenment of, the finance ministries. IFAD-supported projects must give priority to the fight against rural poverty, especially in areas of natural resource degradation. She underlined the value added by IFAD's investments with strategic emphasis on production and income generation, rather than on only social investment. Hence, the productive management of natural resources leads to maintenance of value of the land owned by the farmers, who maintains and reclaims this resource. Lastly, Mrs. Peña Montenegro exhorted the participants to strike up a frank dialogue, which was highly positive for them and stimulated interest in IFAD's action framework in the region.

18. Mr. Tom Owen, FAO representative in El Salvador, referred to FAO's activities and the organisation's mandate. Today, FAO is actively involved in combating desertification and is a member of the Committee for Facilitation of the GM. As do other intergovernmental organisations, FAO assigns high priority to rural poverty alleviation. Clearly, positive action in favour of the disadvantaged masses calls for improving, first of all, the quality of life of these social groups. Mr. Oomen provided an overview at FAO's technical cooperation in the region, which brings to bear its knowledge regarding degraded areas, with emphasis on small producers and on improvement of the returns to their farm labours as well as development of new production alternatives, thus emphasising its link to the mandate of the Convention. He also underlined FAO's continuous and active collaboration in the activities of the GM through WAICENT and the Investment Centre. The strategic alliance between the GM and FAO, together with other organisations, affords opportunities for the tasks to be performed, for example, in agricultural trends, since they are outstanding component of investments in degraded rural areas. There followed a period of questions and answers between the speakers and the participants.

19. Mr. Carlos Lopez Ocaña, IDB (InterAmerican Development Bank) representative in El Salvador, spoke of the general focus of the Bank's support activities especially as regards improvements in the public sector and physical infrastructure. He made it very clear that it is the governments that own the IDB. Of the total of 56 nations, 26 are Bank clients and 20 contribute funds without obtaining financial support. Fifty-one percent of the Bank's shares are held by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Each share-owing country is represented by a Governor - usually the minister of the treasury or finance, and, in addition, has a director in Bank headquarters in Washington. In the countries affected by desertification, practically all IDB projects are somehow related to combating desertification and land degradation. He explained the systems of cooperation applied by the Bank, and the types of support, such as non-reimbursable funds, investment projects and reimbursable technical assistance. The Bank cooperates closely with the Secretariat of the Convention and with the GM. It also collaborates with FAO, the UNEP and other inter-governmental organisations active in the region. Lastly, he suggested that better communication between the national institutions and the Bank's Governors and directors are the most efficient route to a more efficient design and channelling of efforts in the region with a view to investments in the implementation of the Convention.

20. Mrs. Barbara Krause explained the procedures and mechanisms for cooperation and evaluation used by the GTZ in its programmes and projects in developing countries. GTZ focuses mainly on activities devised for peace and for prevention of crisis situation and natural calamities as well as for poverty alleviation and environmental protection. Its proceeds by attempting to strengthen the capacity for action of peoples and local organisations by introducing the concept of sustainable development. She outlined the prospective framework of GTZ activities in the region and in priority areas. GTZ seeks synergy in its development cooperation. This covers a cross-section of subjects such as Poverty. Its vast experience in development cooperation allows it to provide effective service in the 122 countries of the world where it has counterparts.

21. Mr. Bruno Busto Brol, representative of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, briefly explained the activities that this institution is carrying on, including progress in the implementation of priority projects related to prevention of land degradation.

III. Organisation of the Working Groups

22. The participants decided to form three working groups for each one of the sub-regions: Mesoamerica, the Caribbean and South America, with the following main topics: identify the areas of technical and institutional cooperation that could foster effective cooperation in an integrated framework of the problems of land degradation and of natural resource management; identify the priorities of an information management platform that would be conducive to a process of negotiation required for the mobilisation of financial resources.

23. In view of the opportunity afforded by this meeting for the Global Mechanism to promote an open discussion with the countries of the region, the working groups addressed themselves to debating on how to accede to the GM while developing partnership in the region. Their approach to this end was to promote projects and interchange between the different sub-regions and clearly indicate the needs and their relation to the results expected from the Workshop on Resource Mobilisation.

24. The recommendations of each working group are included in Annex I of the Report.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

25. The main results of the workshop are as follows:

- Identify priorities of the countries of the region and the mechanisms of building partnership required for the process of negotiation for, and mobilisation of, financial resources between donors and governments, NGOs, CBOs and the private sector.

- Facilitate the process of resource mobilisation by specifying the procedures leading to a common platform of information interchange (DESELAC, Information Network of the CCD).
- Foster a frame of reference for domestic and external financial resource mobilisation in the LAC region.

26. The strategic role of the Global Mechanism in Latin America and the Caribbean may be summarised as follows:

- Adopt sustainable development plans, institutional and legal, involving stakeholders for cooperation at all levels in order to play the role of partnership in the identification of the financial factors that would foster implementation of the Convention;
- Foster and strengthen the capacity building of, and partnerships with, rural communities while mechanisms for technology transfer are created that bring about new development opportunities;
- Specify and strengthen the information systems required for the communities, government and non-government organisations and assist on the definition of donor action profiles for projects and programmes in the region.

27. Short and medium term involvement of the GM in Latin America and the Caribbean have been based on strengthening activities and programmes geared to policy instruments and their respective environmental effects. The GM, on the basis of its consultations with beneficiaries in the region, is in the process of designing a platform for common information management and introducing an effective mechanism in the exchange of information at different levels. In Latin America and the Caribbean, information represents the basis for intensifying knowledge and practices, opportunities for development and partnership between the communities, NGOs and government agencies and, thus, opportunities for co-financing with the donor and technical assistance community. The strategic initiatives adopted in Latin America and the Caribbean will help make the efforts of the NAP operational at all levels.

28. The conclusions of the working groups may be summarised under the following points of general interest (see Annex 1): the need for decisive strengthening of institutions, for the development of clear and transparent methods for institutional cooperation, and for continuous development and improvement of the functionality of FIELD and DESELAC information. Moreover, the participants from the different regions referred to the need for a greater number of joint activities. In addition, partnership with existing regional and sub-regional organisations as collaborators in the actions in the region was recommended.

29. The participants from the Caribbean sub-region expressed their concern for what they perceive to be a marginalisation of the countries of the sub-region from the activities undertaken under the subject of the Convention. They explained this phenomenon in part as being due to the late ratification or acceptance of the Convention, which led to delayed preparation of reports and of start-up of National Action Programmes. They clearly requested greater support to projects and programmes in their countries, as well as the holding of seminars for awareness-creation at the public level as well as for high policy levels. They also contemplated the possibility of developing an early warning system programme.

30. The participants from the Mesoamerican sub-region considered several specific elements for their countries, which included the following: the need to achieve decentralisation of activities down to the municipal level; a clear need for institutional strengthening as well as the inclusion of organisations that function in the sub-region as cooperating organisations in the programme and projects, as, for example, SICA, the CCAD, and greater cooperation from the Regional Coordination Unit. The urgency to have these opinions and conclusions reach the forthcoming meeting of the Central American Commission was expressed; and, lastly, the need to strengthen certain actions concerned with the Harmonisation of Public Policies, with the river basin management, which is particularly important across national frontiers, for forest productivity and for environmental services.

31. The South American participants examined the need for more coordination and transparency in the activities of the GM and of the CCD Secretariat, and the preparation of intelligible reports on the operational mechanics of these institutions with the countries, the region and the NGOs. They insisted on the need for better coordination and cooperation and the stimulation of synergy with the conventions concerned, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the Kyoto protocol, the Convention concerning wetlands of international importance (Ramsar) and others at the sub-regional level, e.g., the Amazon Cooperation Treaty.

V. Closing of the Workshop

32. Mrs Saez of the Global Mechanism expressed her thanks to the participants and exhorted them to cooperate solidly in a firm support for the Global Mechanism. The GM can be effective only with everyone's active participation in being aware of his/her role, stimulate it and use it in the interest of the implementation of the Convention. She restated the presence of, and support from, the Global Mechanism in all of Latin America and the Caribbean.

33. The Managing Director of the Global Mechanism, Mr. Rydén, closed the event with expression of thanks to the group for their lively participation. He thanked the Government of El Salvador for its warm welcome and for the organisation of the event, and very specially her Excellence the Minister for Environment, Ana Maria Majano, for her valuable collaboration and her interest in the workshop's making a significant contribution with her support for the Global Mechanism in the region.

VI. Participants from the Organisations of the United Nations and of Technical and Financial Cooperation

Mrs. Raquel Peña Montenegro, Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

Mr. Bruno Moro, Resident Representative of UNDP and UN Coordinator in El Salvador

Mr. Tom Oomen, FAO Representative in El Salvador

Mrs Barbara Krause of the GTZ in Nicaragua

Mr. Carlos Lopez Ocaña, Interamerican Development Bank

Mr. Benoit Gaffier, Attache for Cooperation of the Embassy of France in El Salvador

Mr. Bruno Bustos Brol, representative of the CCAD

ANNEX I

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKSHOP

The recommendations emerged from the three Working Groups for the subregions of the Caribbean, South America and Mesoamerica may be summarised as follows:

Caribbean Working Group

Key recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- The Global Mechanism include among its priorities the raising of funds for national seminars for awareness creation and National Action Programs (NAP) in our region.
- Request the Secretariat of the UNCCD and the Global Mechanism of the CCD, to supply adequate information to the countries regarding the methodology, format, financing windows and resources. For example, how to obtain GEF financing through the Global Mechanism.
- Request the Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) to help develop the integrated subregional umbrella (frame) project that has been proposed.
- Request the Global Mechanism to find ways for reinforcing the links between CARICOM and other subregional entities.

In outline, the following plan of action is recommended:

- Subregional meetings/workshops for the development of an integrated project(s) umbrella (framework) for the region.
- Bring all the countries of the subregion at least to the level of National Awareness Creation Seminars by the year 2001, and to the level of National Action Programmes (NAP) for 2002.
- Greater horizontal subregional cooperation.
- Request that the Regional Coordination Unit work more closely and effectively with the Caribbean subregion (for example, in the development of an Early Warning and Drought System.)

- Assure and firm up the essential links between the Global Mechanism and the CCD Secretariat and subregional institutions such as CARICOM, environmental agencies and other institutions where the Caribbean countries meet.
- Assure the participation of politicians in awareness-creating seminars.

South America Working Group

Key recommendations:

It is recommended:

1. To specify the institutional roles within the CCD with a view to an integrated coordination leading to efficient and effective results, to define:

- Role of the Secretariat of the Convention
- Role Global Mechanism of the CCD
- Role of the Coordination Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean

2. The flow of timely information be guaranteed to all country stakeholders and at all levels.

3. Create and firm up the synergy with other Conventions.

4. Create links with other regional organisations and institutions.

In outline, the following plan of action is recommended:

- Supply a flow of information regarding the operational mechanics between the Global Mechanism and the regions, countries and NGOs (rules and procedures for access).
- Creation, implementation and strengthening of information links with national FIELD-DESELAC nodes.
- Analyse the current modes of information and propose solutions for improving their impact through the web site, bulletins, journals, information networks, etc.
- Linking the CCD with other conventions and their financing mechanisms like GEF, such as:
 - Climate Change/Kyoto Protocol, (carbon sinks, adaptability/vulnerability, droughts)
 - Biodiversity (programmes for preserving traditional knowledge)
 - RAMSAR (wetlands)
 - Amazon Cooperation Treaty
- Undertake activities leading to the development of links with other organisations and institutions in the region, such as:
 - European Union
 - Bilaterals (Spain, Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Canada, Nordic Fund, GTZ, etc.)
 - Andean Development Corporation
 - UNESCO (International Hydrology Programme. El Niño Mechanism)
 - IICA (PROCITROPICO, PROCIANDINO)
 - CIAT

Mesoamerican Working Group

Key recommendations:

It is recommended that:

1. There be special emphasis on programmes addressed to poverty alleviation and the subregion's environmental vulnerability, promoting land management for greater social security and productivity.

2. Carry on joint activities by the countries of the region in order to create a common front.

3. Institutionalise the fight against desertification and drought and deal with existing activities rather than promoting new ones.

4. Guiding technical and financial cooperation through the Global Mechanism, as well as SICA, CCAD and the Regional Coordination Unit.

5. Link up with organisations and institutions that are present and active in the subregion.

6. Systematise essential information by means of a common information DESELAC-FIELD platform in order to make decision making easier.

7. Activities necessary for institution-strengthening.

8. Reinforcing environmental services in the subregion.

9. Undertake a diagnosis of how financing institutions operate and identify sources of technical and financial cooperation applicable to the subregion.

In outline, the following plan of activities is recommended:

- Strengthen the programme for Harmonisation of Public Policies.
- Develop planning instruments with decentralised activities (municipalities), which would accomplish the following:
 - Emphasis on watershed management and water resources
 - Emphasis on programs for forest productivity
- Linking up with operational activities and others within the following programmes:
 - Regional undertakings within the Centre for the Prevention of Natural Desasters;
 - Mesoamerican Biological Corridor;
 - CCAD/Woodland and Biodiversity;
 - Programme for Cross-frontier Watershed Management;
 - ANP regional programme;
 - Regional Climate Change Programme.
- Present to the Central American Commission (CCA) a proposal of regional concern for the meeting to be held in Guatemala in November 2000.